

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 16 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein.

Please amend Claims 15, 20 and 21 as follows.

1. (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus comprising:
an input unit arranged to input image data; and
an embedding unit arranged to embed first information and second information in the image data as electronic watermark information, the second information representing whether the first information is the latest information,
wherein said embedding unit further embeds third information and fourth information, the fourth information representing whether the third information is the latest information.

2 - 3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim [[3]] 1, wherein each of the first and third information specifies said apparatus.

5. (Previously Presented) An image processing method comprising the steps of:
inputting image data; and

embedding first information and second information in the image data as electronic watermark information, the second information representing whether the first information is the latest information,

wherein the embedding step further embeds third information and fourth information, the fourth information representing whether the third information is the latest information.

6. (Previously Presented) A computer program product comprising a computer readable medium having a computer program code, for an image processing, comprising the procedure codes of:

an inputting process procedure code for inputting image data; and

an embedding process procedure code for embedding first information and second information in the image data as electronic watermark information, the second information representing whether the first information is the latest information,

wherein said embedding process further embeds third information and fourth information, the fourth information representing whether the third information is the latest information.

7-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus comprising:

an input unit arranged to input image data having a plurality of color components; and

an embedding unit arranged to embed first information and second information in at least one of the plurality of color components in the image data as electronic watermark information, the second information representing that the first information is the latest information,

wherein the first information is information for specifying said apparatus, and the second information represents that later information is not contained in a color component different from that in which the first information has been embedded.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said embedding unit embeds the electronic watermark information as binary data in at least one of the plurality of color components.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said embedding unit embeds the electronic watermark information as binary data in at least one of the plurality of color components by switching the dither pattern used.

20. (Currently Amended) An image processing method comprising the steps of:

inputting image data having a plurality of color components; and

embedding first information and second information in at least one of the plurality of color components in the image data as electronic watermark information, the second information representing that the first information is the latest information,

wherein the first information is information for specifying said apparatus, and the second information represents that later information is not contained in a color component different from that in which the first information has been embedded.

21. (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising a computer readable medium having a computer program code, for an image processing, comprising the procedure codes of:

an inputting process procedure code for inputting image data having a plurality of color components; and

an embedding process procedure code for embedding first information and second information in at least one of the plurality of color components in the image data as electronic watermark information, said second information representing that the first information is the latest information,

wherein the first information is information for specifying said apparatus, and the second information represents that later information is not contained in a color component different from that in which the first information has been embedded.

22-24. (Cancelled)